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March 27, 2012

Shane Bauer  
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Re: Your Letter Dated March 23, 2012

Shane,

What an honor and privilege it is to have received a letter from you. I followed the plight of you, Sarah and Josh. I was both intrigued and empathetically sensitive to your ordeal. And I was very glad to hear about your safe return.

Brother, you may have not spent as much time in solitary or segregation as I but your experience was enough to link us in a spirit of identification, commonalities and strength. You see, like you, I know what it is like to have our very existence internalized to the point of kissing Siren on the lips while she guided us to the rocks of insanity. Then, wondering if we'd ever escape her spell. Fortunately we both did. But as you will learn about you and me, we did not come out unscathed. And yet, we may never know the full extent of the damage or understand fully just how much our experience impacted us. At times, I feel like curling up in a fetal position and shouting, "Are there no stones in heaven?!" Then at other times I mourn the solitudinous of days gone past. Days where time lost all meaning; to the point where I knew not if I was alive or dead; and where sometimes I did not care either way.

I am glad to hear that you are writing about your experience. Maybe that will help you heal. Maybe I should have. And maybe I will, through you.

Shane, let me be honest with you about something. I have had many people get at me to write about my experiences or to answer questions only to find out that they care not about what I've gone through. They are really concerned about the money they will make off my experiences. And everyone wants the jailhouse lawyer **Castillo** but no one wants to help me with the things that made me that guy. It's like they visualize me as a bored prisoner pacing his days away in the cell with nothing more to do; as